DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 274 780 CE 045 052

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TITLE Dawn of a New Day. A WKCSC Presentation.
PUB DATE 23 Oct 86
NOTE 24p.; Papers presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Association for Adult and Continuing Education (Hollywood, FL, October 23, 1986).
PUB TYPE Reports - Descriptive (141) -- Speeches/Conference Papers (150)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Adult Students; *College Students; *Community Colleges; Counseling Techniques; Demography; Higher Education; Outreach Programs; *Part Time Students; Refugees; *Student Characteristics; Student Motivation; *Student Needs; Student Recruitment

ABSTRACT

This panel contains presentations by four members of the Western Kansas Community Services Consortium (WKCSC) who are involved in either teaching or administering college programs in Kansas in which part-time students are participating. Joyce Hartmann underscores the importance of part-time students as growing consumers of college programming in her introduction to the collection. In his paper entitled "The Part-Time Student: Dawn of a New Day," Theodore W. Wischropp summarizes the results of his investigation of the changing demographics of the college student body and explains why more must be done to accommodate the needs of part-time students. The distinctive characteristics and special needs of part-time students and guidelines for packaging education for a changing work force are the subject of a presentation by Joyce Hartmann. In another presentation, Jane Morgan describes some of the needs of the diverse types of part-time students attending Hutchinson Community College as well as some of the college's efforts to meet these needs. In his paper, Doug Radohl describes some efforts at Seward County Community College to help two specific groups of part-time adult students, outreach (or off-campus) and refugee students. A conclusion by Joyce Hartmann ends the collection. (MN)

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WESTERN KANSAS COMMUNITY SERVICES CONSORTIUM

ED274780

AAACE ANNUAL CONFERENCE

HOLLYWOOD, FLORIDA

October 23, 1986

"DAWN OF A NEW DAY"

A WKCSC PRESENTATION

by

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Executive Director, WKCSC

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Seward County Community College

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CE 043 052

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J Hartmann
Western Kansas Community Services Consortium

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

Speaker: Joyce Hartmann (accompanied by slides)

DAWN OF A NEW DAY

INTRODUCTION

Our topic concerns part-time students: demographics, packaging education for a changing workforce, recruitment, retention, and counseling strategies, motivation, and special needs of older students. You'll hear viewpoints of presidents, deans, counselors, business, and part-time students themselves.

We're all from Kansas, and quite familiar with the conference theme "Lifelong Learning: Sunrise to Sunset". Kansas is famous for its sunrises and sunsets!

The Dawn of a New Day: Colleges are not just for "traditional" students anymore. In Kansas, for instance, 70% of our headcount are part-time students...most of them older returning students, what we call "non-traditional"...in our new proportions this term doesn't even make sense anymore. I propose we change the name and our thinking, to "neo-traditional" or "new traditional" student...This new breed of student holds as much promise for potential as the dawn of each new day.

Panel speakers are all members of the Western Kansas Community Services Consortium, WKCSC, in existence since 1971. The Consortium consists of ten postsecondary institutions: the community colleges of Barton County, Cloud County, Colby, Dodge City, Garden City, Hutchinson, Pratt, and Seward County; and two universities, Fort Hays State University, and Kansas State University.

Today you will hear from Dr. Theodore W. Wischropp, president, Seward County Community College; Doug Radohl, WKCSC vice president and dean of community services at Seward County Community College; Jane Morgan, continuing education advisor at Hutchinson Community College, and myself, Joyce Hartmann, executive director of WKCSC.

We hope to share with you the importance of the part-time student to your school. We hope to help you make your president or your faculty or your community aware of this new consumer, in order to change your college's mindset, to think of innovative strategies and visions to include this relatively new population.

I encourage you to look into the demographics of your own community, to arm yourself with the numbers, to back your opinions with the facts. This will be very important to you.

To get you started on this very important topic, you will now hear a summary of some of these national demographics....our first speaker, Ted Wischropp:

Theodore W. Wischropp
President
Seward County Community College
Liberal, Kansas

AAACE ANNUAL CONFERENCE, HOLLYWOOD, FL - October 23, 1986

The Part-time Student: Dawn of a New Day

The part-time student has always been an important component of community college enrollments. However, the part-time student numbers have gradually grown - perhaps, rapidly grown is a better descriptor - until now the majority of our student body is made up of students enrolled in less than 12 hours.

Nationally, the percentage is over 60 percent part-time. In Kansas, our average percentage of part-time students in our 19 community colleges is close to 70 percent.

As administrators, we welcomed the influx of the part-time students for two reasons. In Kansas our state funding is FTE-driven. Second, like everyone else in the country, our traditional 18-20 year-old student numbers have declined.

We encouraged our deans to make classes easily accessible at times and places that would accommodate the needs of part-time students. We instigated many initiatives to better serve the requirements and demands that part-time students made. Most of us did and are doing a pretty good job. Some colleges have been very innovative.

My concern is that we are not doing enough in the area of student services including academic advising, academic placement, financial aid advising, etc. Have we been guilty of enrolling people in classes, grabbing their tuition, and then leaving them in academic limbo to fend for themselves? Early on - maybe so. Nowadays - I don't think so.

Theodore W. Wischropp
President
Seward County Community College
Liberal, Kansas

Other members of the panel will describe some of the efforts they are making in their colleges to address my concern. But let me set the stage with some demographic data that impact our approach to dealing with student services especially for the part-time student. The implication is that these data apply to part-time as well as full-time students. These demographics also have relevance for both two- and four-year institutions.

Demographic information is important for three reasons:

1. It acquaints us with the nature of a population or group which is of interest to us.
2. Demographics allow us to make inferences about special needs of our clientele and, therefore, programs which we may need to provide in order to address these needs.
3. And finally, demographics can help us predict the future.

I have gleaned some of this information from a variety of sources, but much of it comes from an address at Kansas State University last February by Dr. Don Hoyt and an address at the University of Texas at Austin in the spring of 1985 by Dr. "Bud" Hodgkinson.

1. Between now and the turn of the century, we can expect a decline of about one million full-time students but a significant increase in part-time students.
2. Eighty-eight percent of the nation's four-year colleges and universities are providing remedial instruction to students this year compared with 79 percent in 1981. At two-year colleges, the proportion with remedial courses increased from 84 percent to 95

percent in the same period. (The Chronicle of Higher Education, October 8, 1986, p. 30.)

3. For the rest of the century, the percentage of college students who need both financial and academic assistance will increase significantly.
4. Of those who enter four-year colleges as freshmen, only 46 percent graduate after four years. Only about 7 in 10 graduate from some institution within seven years.
5. By 1992, half of all college students in America will be over 25 years old, and 20 percent will be over 35.
6. About half of those who drop out of college do so during the first year. And the majority of these either drop out or experience serious misgivings about their decision to attend within the first four weeks of class.
7. Although 29 percent more Blacks graduated from high school in 1982 than did in 1975, Black enrollment in college dropped by 11 percent in that period. High school graduation rates increased for Hispanics by 39 percent during that period, while college enrollments for that group declined by 16 percent.
8. By the year 2000, one-third of the American population will be members of a minority group. The largest of these will be Hispanic, followed closely by Black, but the fastest growing segment will be Asian-American.

Theodore W. Wischropp
President
Seward County Community College
Liberal, Kansas

9. The average ages of U.S. population groups are 31 for whites, 25 for blacks, and 22 for Hispanics.

10. About half of the American adult population is engaged in some form of life-long learning. Of the 40 million or so involved, colleges and universities are serving 12 million.

I do not have the answers as to how we can best address the potential changing needs of our students between now and the end of the century. However, it seems to me that when you are talking about student services for part-time students, you are not talking about "business as usual". Student services offices in community colleges have already begun to modify somewhat their focus. Too often, I'm afraid, the impetus for change emanates over in the continuing education office.

How does your college plan to respond in the area of student services for part-time students?

PRESENTATION BY JOYCE HARTMANN (Accompanied by slides)

Among many projects our Consortium sponsors an annual conference dealing with topics of interest to administrators involved in continuing education. Last year's conference dealt with the topic of part-time students; this presentation will discuss some highlights of that conference. (This year on February 19 and 20 WKCSC will host a conference in Hutchinson, about non-credit programs and how to make them pay.)

The part-time student is a very special student with special needs. We often do not do a very good job of meeting these needs.

For instance, look what we do for "traditional" students: we provide activity passes, intramurals, convenient libraries and resource centers, counseling and access to many faculty, use of computers, many supports.

Most of our non-traditional students do not have access to these services, particularly out-district rural students. They don't really want parties and games...but they do have a right to some supports.

If they get any, they're usually the result of extra efforts on our parts. For instance, in one 310 grant, a project of KSDE and WKCSC, Hutchinson provided some supports to its Hispanic part-time students.

These included convenient classes in their own neighborhoods at a local church or grade school, helpful tutors, and free child care. This setup resulted in an increase of 133 new students that semester.

Who are our part-time students? They come from many segments: they can be powerful, such as a member of the Board of Trustees, or even the state commissioner...they are increasingly women, who help support the family farm, or a single head of household, or who are starting their own businesses....one out of three new businesses are owned and managed by women; they are displaced oil field workers; or farmers who are switching from crops of wheat to sunflowers; they may be executives who want to get ahead; they are Orientals; Hispanics; some are middle-aged and overweight; and some are members of the sunset years, who may leave your college an endowment, and who would like to take meaningful classes to enhance their quality of life and to improve health.

These students are all important to our colleges. Often we take advantage of them; we take them for granted.

Why don't we do a better job with our part-timers? Why don't we provide more services to them? A counselor at our conference suggested that most of us are traditional university graduates, not community college grads, and our mindsets, too, are traditional. Presidents are probably a bit leary of part-timers; they generally like traditional things such as bands and athletics. Also administrators are leary of budget reallocations and paperwork associated

with sheer numnbers of part-time students. He emphasized that there is no area of his college that needed a more concise marketing plan.

We must begin thinking about what our consumers want. Businesses are entering the educational field in vast numbers, giving degrees and certificates as valid as any received by universities.

We asked a coordinator of professional development at Boeing Military Airplane Co. to give us some advice. Although our rural community business are small, (Boeing employs 17,000) his tips are valuable. I've summarized them here:

(Handouts provided)

* Do not assume businesses know what they want or even need. Build a case selling your services.
* Allow for alternative delivery systems, flexibility, transferability (if workers have to move). Consider such helps as independent study and videotaping.
* Maintain a continual working relationship with local businesses: join Rotary and other networking organizations.
* Understand the meaning of return-on-investment. What will the student gain from the class? Be results-oriented.
* Time is a luxury; everything's due yesterday.
* Be creative on staffing; use industry people when needed.
* Develop a "can-do" attitude.
* Follow basic sales principles: get in front of your customer and sell your stuff.
* Communicate with your customer...students.
* Always think ahead; encourage students to make career choices early.
* Remember that people need feedback and recognition.
* Grades are important; in some jobs those people who made average grades are not even considered. Also it's important to students to get a degree, a closure, which is required for many job openings.
* Modify your enrollment and advisement capabilities; make it easy! Enrollment by phone and mail payment...
* We need more business in Kansas. Business cannot survive without you, the educator.

Finally, ask your own students what they want, what they need, what they like and dislike.

We had a panel of part-time students at our conference. They told us they liked access to child care; "lay people" teachers (not "real" teachers); a maximum of 3 to 6 hours a semester, about all they could handle with their jobs and home responsibilities; they wanted labs for problem-solving classes, and tutors to assist them in harder classes.

They all expressed fears at returning to college. But they all said one of the main reasons they came to Hutchinson Community College was due to the efforts of a counselor who cared, who knew their names, who sent them information, who met them on street corners, always with a smile, showed concern from "sunrise to sunset": this counselor is our next speaker, Jane Morgan.

PRESENTATION BY JANE MORGAN

Who are these part-time students? They are the wonderful people who began to come in droves to our campus just when the number of graduating high school seniors began to dwindle. Aren't we thankful for them!

There is no typical part-time student. Part-time students have PhD's and MBA's; part-time students have not completed high school but come to our campus seeking a G.E.D.

Part-time students want skills to enter the work force or to make a career change; or part-time students want art or music or wood hobbies to aid in escaping from workplace stress. Some want CEU's, some want recertification, some want promotion. Some even want an education! Each part-time student has his own personal goal -- it would be very wrong to force them into a single mold.

All this means that those who work with part-time students must be very accepting of all kinds of people. Many who come back to school have agonized over this decision and feel very self-conscious about being on-campus. Some come in desperation -- the person just laid-off from a job or the recent divorcee with great pressure to support her family.

We must provide a whole package of services for this new segment of the student body.

Most part-time students are busy people. Because of this, they need easy, simplified enrollment procedures. They do not appreciate standing in line or being told to report to many offices - the run around. At H.C.C. we use telephone enrollment for students taking fewer than 12 hours, set up an enrollment booth at our shopping mall, and pre-enroll current students in the evenings when they are already

on-campus for class. Prior to each semester, we hold special evening college enrollment and registration nights for those students.

We have developed a special combined application-enrollment-receipt form for part-time students. This form reduces the anger and frustration which adults can quickly develop when given a stack of forms to be completed! It also helps us in Continuing Education when one person has responsibility for enrollment, accepting tuition money and selling books to an off-campus class. We do go to our off-campus sites with enrollment held in that location.

We print labels for use on enrollment forms for our current students so that his address, curriculum and adviser information is prepared for the next semeser.

Ease of enrollment is the first very needed service for part-time students.

To successfully work with returning part-time students, an adviser must give them time and attention; find out the student's goals and plans; also be very slow about saying "it must be this way." The best things an adviser can do are listen, present options the student may not have been aware of, but then be sure the final choices are always the student's.

These people really appreciate and need personal attention -- the area phone directory is close to my desk. Many hand-written, personal notes go to students. Evaluations of educational records, learning about their families, knowing their job situation -- in other words - getting acquainted is important. All this takes time. On the other hand, we must not waste their time. The adviser must have answers to their questions readily available. An adviser working with part-time

students in many subject areas must know the college catalog, must know the options, must know where to refer students. The bottom line is to give accurate information. These people really believe what they are told! They carry around their little scraps of paper on which are written their long-range plan: classes to take and things to do!

Communication is especially important with students who are on-campus only occassionally. This must be two way communication so we send Evening Student Guides to their homes so that they have directory information, answers to frequently asked questions such as about tutoring, counseling, pre-enrollment and so forth. Also, I give questionnaires to the students to get <u>their</u> input and suggestions. I have mentioned phone calls and personal notes. Literally hundreds are called or written per semester. We also schedule special coffee/donut nights at which time college administrators and department chairpersons are available to answer questions or hear suggestions. We also do the same at our off-campus sites. All of this helps to recognize these persons as valuable students.

Part-time students are not on-campus much of the time except for their classes but when they are there, they expect and need the service personnel to be available. Sadly, this is too often not true. As adviser to evening college students, I need to be available in the evening -- before class -- during break -- after class -- but I also need to be there during the day to fulfill another role of persons working on behalf of part-time students.

This is the Ombudsman role -- "The person in the part-time student's corner." The Ombudsman is the person who understands the system in its entirety: from admissions, registration, records,

finance and financial aid, department organization and who can cut the red tape. Usually it is a matter of being helpful, being willing to bodily leave one's own office and of making the right connections. Very important in the Ombudsman's role is to be careful not to make promises one cannot keep.

This package of services aids part-timers in reaching their goals as it promotes retention of students.

When we give a package to someone, we often get something in return whether we expect to receive it or not.

I am an academic adviser for several hundred evening college students at Hutchinson Community College. I have met wonderful people and felt great satisfaction when "my" students graduate.

Many special groups of part-time students with which I work need unusual programs.

One such group is composed of incarcerated young adult men in a maximum security prison. I visit my advisees there every Wednesday afternoon on an appointment basis. That experience has been a serindipity for me!

Older adults - those over sixty - are another special group of part-time students. Briefly, some unique services for these people include low-cost tuition for regular classes, and special non-credit College at 60 programs for local citizens who want a light load, but also want stimulating classes. I am also now campus coordinator for Elderhostel. Don't plan an Elderhostel to make money! Plan Elderhostel to be rejuvenated - if you can survive the week of activities. I really endorse the Elderhostel concept.

To me people are life's most interesting source of excitement and

fun. Part-time students are valuable, worthwhile persons who deserve our best services. Let's be certain they are receiving them.

Hartmann:

To provide another viewpoint of effective programs for the part-time adult student, particularly in areas of outreach and refugees, I present the Dean of Community Services at Seward County Community College, Doug Radohl.

PRESENTATION BY DOUG RADOHL

This portion of the presentation is to relate what we are doing at Seward County Community College to help two specific groups of part-time adult students. The first is the outreach (or off-campus) student; and the second is the refugee student (Southeast Asian).

The outreach student is one who is attending classes at one of our ten off-campus centers in a very isolated and rural section of southwestern Kansas. Let me explain how rural we are. SCCC is a community college of approximately 650 full-time equivalent students. We have approximately 1600 students including part-time. SCCC is located in a community of approximately 17,000 people. SCCC serves a region of six and one-half counties with a total population of approximately 44,000 people. The closest city of any size in Kansas is Wichita, which is 200 miles from Liberal. The closest state university is approximately 185 miles from Liberal. SCCC averages approximately 410 students per semester in our outreach centers.

As we began to see the need for more services for the part-time student on campus, so did we notice that outreach students also had this need, perhaps even more, especially because they did not have as easy access to college personnel, facilities, resources, etc. as the on-campus part-time student.

In addition, I noticed that many of our adult students in outreach were repeat students, those taking courses regularly and accumulating hours, but with no direction or goals other than perhaps self-satisfaction or learning for learning's sake.

Therefore, together with our counseling center, we decided to do

something to better meet the needs of our outreach students. This could best be accomplished by having a counselor go to the outreach centers and provide academic advising and assistance.

David S. Crockett, formerly of ACT, gives the following definition of advising, "Academic advising assists students to realize the maximum educational benefits of their college experience by understanding their needs and expectations, knowing their goals and resources of the institution they are attending, and bringing these two elements into optimal congruence through individualized program development."

In other words, we have a responsibility to provide guidance through academic advising to assist students to become better educated and better equipped to meet their goals and needs. This is true of part-time students just as much as full-time students.

To determine who wanted these services, we sent letters to each student, which were handed out in the outreach classes by the instructors. The instructor would then send the ones completed to my office, which I share with the counselor working with the outreach student. In addition, in the letter we indicated they could take an inventory assessment that would be helpful in pointing out careers that match the adult student's interests, abilities, and values. We use the Career Occupational Preference System (COPS). They could indicate on the form whether they wanted advising, the inventory, or both. Also, we put an article in the local newspapers which cover our centers providing the same information and giving potential adult students an opportunity to call us on our toll-free number if they were interested in the advising or inventory.

After we received the results of the survey, we set up times in the outreach center to be available to provide both the advising and the inventory. We notified those responding by personal letter and/or by telephone, and for others, the time, date, place and purpose was put into

the local newspapers.

On the evening of the advisement meeting, the counselor and myself (a former counselor) drive to the outreach center and meet with the interested adult student both as a group and individually. The counselor first talks about the inventory, explaining its purpose, that it could be taken at home, self-scored or could be sent in to be scored by our staff, and then an appointment could be made for additional interpretation if desired.

After the discussion of the inventory and any questions are answered, the counselor/advisor discussed general items such as degree requirements, what general education courses are, etc. We hand out college catalogues. Next, we have the students fill out their degree checklist sheets using their transcripts, if they have any previous college hours either from SCCC or any other accredited colleges or universities. I might add at this point, we require a transcript of all students whether full or part-time. So, therefore, we have a folder on all students, and we bring this folder with us to the advising session. As we have the students do this, we can work individually with each student, answering questions, helping them to fill out their checklist, and helping them to see what general required courses they have taken and what they have left to take. As outreach coordinator, this is helpful to me to see some of the courses students will be needing, as well as helpful to them, because it allows me to match a course with their need.

Another thing included in their folder is any standardized test information if they have taken any . The counselor could use this to identify the skill levels of students. If they do not have standardized scores and would like to take something to help assess their basic skill levels, we can offer the student the opportunity to take the ASSET , which

is an assessment program from the American College Testing Program (ACT) out of Iowa City, Iowa. It is primarily for community colleges to efficiently and effectively gather information about individual students' skills, needs, and plans, as an important step in the process of assisting the student in developing and implementing a sound program of study that leads to these goals. It includes skills assessment in three areas: Language Usage skills, Reading skills, and Numerical skills. To take this test, the outreach student would have to call the Counseling Center and drive to campus to take it. This is new this fall so we are just starting to introduce ASSET to adult students.

After we have completed the group advising, the counselor and I will visit individually with those who want and/or need additional assistance. This gives us an opportunity to explore options, and to help them plan and choose which direction they want to go.

From here, they can call us toll-free, set up an appointment on campus, or visit us again next time we are in their community, which is at least once or twice a semester.

It is probably not possible for outreach students to take every class they need for an associate degree off-campus. But they can obtain many if not most of them, depending upon their program of study. Once they have obtained a large number of hours, their motivation to drive the necessary miles to campus will indeed increase.

Another program we have to assist a specific group of part-time students is our refugee services program. With funding rom the Kansas State Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services, we are providing special services to a group of Southeast Asian refugees who have recently moved into our area. They come with several special needs. They come

motivated to improve themselves and their lives, but often lack the language skills to immediately fulfill those needs. We have six levels of English as a Second Language classes to help them. If they are beyond that instructional level, two higher level Conversational English classes are offered for college credit. We test all refugees with the B.E.S.T. (Basic English Skills Tests) to determine their placement in English classes.

In addition to English instruction, we provide counseling, including academic advising, career counseling, some personal counseling, social adjustment, crisis counseling, and job maintenance counseling. Also, the refugee center provides translation and interpretation for those needing these services.

Third, we provide job placement for refugees, either part-time or full-time depending upon the needs of the student.

Fourth, we provide some child care and transportation to and from classes for a limited number of students based upon need. Most students have their own transportation, but for those who don't, it can be quite a barrier to the student.

Finally, the refugee services provides assistance with immigration/ naturalization, health related services, home management, and legal matters.

CONCLUSION (By Joyce Hartmann, accompanied by slides.)

In conclusion, I'd like to steal an idea from Garrison Keelor's Prairie Home Companion show on National Public Radio. One of his commercial sponsors is Ralph's Pretty Good Grocery, where if you can't find what you need, you can probably get along without it....I'd urge you to consider whether your institution is like that: Ralph's Pretty Good College or Learning Center, where if you can't find it you can probably get along without it. If it is, we know we're going to make some changes.

We hope you all found some food for thought from this panel...and as you go out with your colleagues, you'll remember this issue and discuss it with them, and that you'll be able to sail right on out now to meet this new challenge: the dawn of a new day.